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ANIMAL-HEADED GODS, EVANGELISTS, SAINTS AND RIGHTEOUS MEN

By Zofia Ameisenowa

Among the most remarkable and the most puzzling representations found in all civilizations and all periods until the end of the Middle Ages must be numbered the human forms bearing the heads of animals. I refer, of course, only to those hybrid figures which occur in a religious, magical or symbolical context and must therefore be expected to embody religious ideas and superstitious practices. Without undertaking an exhaustive study of the earlier history of the problem in the oriental religions, my intention is to publish select and representative monuments which elucidate the history, morphology and changes in the symbolic meaning of these hybrid forms from Roman times onwards.

Rome: The Mystery Religions

In the art of the Roman republic, in accordance with the sound common-sense character of the Roman state and city religion which prevailed until the reign of the first Emperor, the representation of gods in the form of animals was sedulously avoided. After the conquest of Egypt and Syria, however, a wave of alien cults serving exotic deities from the East swept irresistibly over the whole Empire. There was some opposition from the side of the far-sighted Romans. But no mere declaration of an edict could stem the impulse of the masses to seek after wonders, and in spite of punishment, and the banishment of Jews and Chaldees from the capital, the populace continued to find their spiritual experiences in the powerfully emotional mystery cults of Eastern religions.¹ The widely diffused teaching of the Stoics, now tinged with fatalism, which placed the course of the world under the rule of omnipotent *Heimarmene* and provided so fruitful a field for astrological speculation, opened the way to the classic advocates of practical and theoretical astrology, the so-called Chaldees, and through them to the strange oriental cults.

On the zodiacs of Dendera, which are the point of departure for all research into the history of astrology, we find remarkable representations. Between Taurus and Gemini, there is a lion-headed man; between Gemini and Cancer, the planet Jupiter bearing the head of a sparrow-hawk; between Virgo and Libra, Saturn with a bull's head; above Capricorn, Mars with the head of a sparrow-hawk.²

I express my warmest thanks to the British Federation of University Women, Occupied Countries Fund Committee, who by their financial assistance made possible my long stay in London and the acquisition of many photographs; to the Staff of the Warburg Institute, especially to Dr. Charles Talbot for his careful translation of my text into English; to Mr. Francis Wormald, Assistant Keeper of Western Manuscripts in the British Museum; to Mr. Richard Hunt, Keeper of Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford;

and to Miss Piloo Nanavutty of Bombay for her assistance in obtaining the necessary photographs. For one reproduction from the Milan Bible I am indebted to Dr. Rosy Schilling. Were Professor Saxl alive my thanks would above all have gone to him for his interest in my work and his help in collecting much of the new material.

¹ F. Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*, 3rd ed., Paris, 1929.

² F. Boll, *Sphaera*, 1903, pp. 237-8.

But the most diverse shapes and the most fertile fantasies were reserved for the lore of the thirty-six Dekans, that is, the divine rulers of every ten degrees of the ecliptic, the period which corresponds to the ten days of the Egyptian week. Whether their origin is Babylonian (Boll's theory)¹ or Egyptian (Gundel's theory)² is not yet decided. They are known under many synonyms such as stars, luminaries, tutelary stars, the divine ones, or more often "the souls of the living gods of the Dekans."³ The diffusion, importance and strength of the Dekans in astrological divination and the belief in their powerful influence on the destiny of man's soul after death increased with the wider propagation of astrological belief and the emergence of late antique syncretism from the fusion of the many oriental religions with the Greek religion. Their most important characteristic was and has always remained their heads, their "faces." Instead of Dekans, they were often called in Greek texts simply *prosopa*, and in Latin, *facies*, their faces being, for the most part, those of animals.

After the mysteries of Isis, the next of the mystery cults which invaded Rome about the end of the first century B.C. was that of the Persian light and sun deity, Mithras.⁴ The Mithraic religion, introduced into the Roman empire by the magi,⁵ spread rapidly to the most distant frontiers where it was carried by the imperial legions, slaves and merchants. From the Danube to the Thames and from the Rhine to the Euphrates (Doura-Europos) were to be found the subterranean sacred caves of Mithras, the "spelaea," where, in the dim mysterious light, the mystes were initiated into rites of the Persian doctrine. The culminating point of the sacred act which was attained by the mystes in the seventh degree of initiation was the communion, the *agape* of the initiates, a commemoration of the banquet of Mithras with the sun.⁶ The Mithraic caves were decorated with sculpture or painting the iconography of which followed an established pattern. The chief scene of Mithras slaying the Bull was often surrounded by smaller ones representing the deeds of the God and by the twelve signs of the zodiac which played an important part in Mithraic worship of the sun. This cult image was sometimes accompanied by a representation of the communion of the initiates. We find this, for instance, on a relief from Konjica in Bosnia⁷ (Pl. 16b) and similarly in a wall painting from Doura-Europos. Near the three-legged table, upon which are placed four consecrated loaves, are seated two mystes, presumably "patres," that is, those who have been admitted to the seventh degree of initiation. From left to right we see a man with the head of a bird of prey (perhaps an eagle, for the lower degrees of mystes like the raven, corax, were not allowed to be present at the sacrificial banquet), next to him a "Persian," recognizable by the characteristic Phrygian cap, holding in his hand a drinking cup. On the other side stand the "miles" (now without his head) and the lion-headed "leo." Beneath

¹ F. Boll ed. by W. Gundel, *Sternglaube und Sterndeutung*, 3rd ed., 1926, pp. 59-60.

² W. Gundel, *Dekane und Dekansternebilder* (Studien der Bibliothek Warburg, XIX), 1936, *passim*.

³ A. Bouché-Leclercq, *L'Astrologie Grecque*, 1899, pp. 216-20.

⁴ F. Cumont transl. by G. Gehrich, *Die Mysterien des Mithra*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1911.

⁵ F. Cumont and I. Bidez, *Les mages hellénisés*, 1938, I, p. 35, n. 3.

⁶ Cumont-Gehrich, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-56.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Pl. III, fig. 7, and p. 137, text.

the table a lion and a bull are crouching, perhaps representations of Cautopathes and Cautes (the rising and the setting sun).¹ The nomenclature of the seven degrees of initiates in the mysteries of Mithra is by no means uniform, and as Cumont points out, following Porphyry there were other designations applied to the mystes, such as hyena, eagle and falcon.² The seven stages through which the initiate had to pass in order to be admitted to the Mithraic mysteries were intended to symbolize the migration and purification of the soul which after death must pass through the seven planetary spheres and be stripped of all its sinful veils until it is restored to purity and may gaze upon God as man's likeness. During his migration, the mystes recited sacred formulae and uttered inarticulate sounds: he clicked his tongue, whistled, stammered and roared.³ According to Pseudo-Augustine: "Some flapped their wings like birds and imitated the cawing of ravens, others roared like lions."⁴ Porphyry, following Pallas' statement, believed that these mysterious ceremonies symbolized "to stretch out towards the zodiacal circle."⁵

Cumont's celebrated work⁶ appeared in 1899 before the publication of both Boll's⁷ and Gundel's⁸ important contributions brought to light much new and hitherto unknown material bearing upon the astrological beliefs of late antiquity and the Middle Ages. Cumont agrees that the Mithraic initiation rites were an imitation of the soul's journey through the planetary spheres into the realm of eternal light and purity, but the question whether the heads of animals with which the initiates were invested were connected with the signs of the zodiac is controversial.⁹ We possess, however, a precious piece of evidence that there really existed in late classical times a theory according to which the souls of the dead must take on the forms of astral gods. We find this evidence in the famous polemical work of Origen in which he turned against the anti-Christian pamphlet of Celsus. In a well-known passage Origen,¹⁰ in order to impugn with greater effect Celsus' invective against the Christians, describes a diagram belonging to the Gnostic sect of the Ophites, and gives in detail the names and the salient characteristics of the seven Archons of the Ophites, which names they had borrowed from the Jews: Michael with the head of a lion; Suriel resembling a bull; Raphael like a reptile; Gabriel with an eagle's head; Tautabaoth resembling a bear;

¹ F. Cumont, *Textes et Monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra*, 1899, I, p. 210.

² *Ibid.*, I, p. 314, note 8. F. Boll, "Der Adler als Mystengrad," *Archiv. f. Rel. Wiss.*, XIX, pp. 553-4.

³ Cumont-Gehrich, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

⁴ *Quaest. Vet. et Nov. Test.* 114.

⁵ πρὸς τὸν ζῳδιακὸν κύκλον ἀποτείνειν. (Porphyry, *De abstinencia*, IV, 16.)

⁶ Cumont, *Textes et Monuments*, I, p. 312 ff.; *Les Mystères de Mithra*, p. 139.

⁷ F. Boll, *Sphaera*, 1903; *Sterngläub und Sternedeutung*, 1922.

⁸ W. Gundel, *Dekane und Dekansternebilder*, 1936.

⁹ Cf. A. Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie*, 3rd ed., 1923; W. Wili, "Die römischen Sonnen-gottheiten und Mithra," *Eranos Jahrbuch*, X, 1943, p. 157 ff.; R. Eisler, *Orphisch-dionysische Mysteriengedanken in der christlichen Antike* (Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg, II), 1925, p. 319.

Eisler had already suspected the true facts of the case when he appealed to a text of Eusebius: "According to their behaviour the souls must pass through various animals, assumed to exist as stars in the sky" whose form they take on. (*Op. cit.*, p. 316 and p. 319, note 3.)

¹⁰ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, VI, 30.

Erathaoth with a dog's head; Onoel with an ass's head. This text has been used and explained by a number of scholars. But this passage is followed by another of even greater importance which leads to a fuller understanding of several mysterious representations and which until now has been left out of account at least by archaeologists and art historians.¹ In it Celsus mentioned other fables according to which there were "men who (after death) assumed the shapes of these spirits and were called lions, bulls, dragons, eagles, bears or dogs." I think we may perhaps conclude from this passage that not only Gnostics but also believers in Mithra, whose religion and mysteries were exercising their deepest influence at the time these lines were written, believed that after their death they would become stars; they would be transformed into the living souls of the gods, that is into the animal-headed astral gods of the 36 decades of the solar year, and they would live for ever in the heaven of the planets in undisturbed peace and purity. Anz shows in his book on Gnosis,² which has not lost its value even at the present time, that the most important doctrine of all the Gnostic sects was the journey of the soul through the seven planetary spheres. This is a tenet similar to those of the Mithraic mysteries, although the Gnostic writings grew out of Christianity. The characteristic feature of Gnostic fatalism which is strongly biased by astrological ideas is the marked pessimistic dualism probably drawn from Persian religion. The powers of the stars (the Archons of the planets) which play so leading a part in Gnosis are evil, cruel and inimical to the soul, drawing it into sin in order later to chastise it. These Archons, of which Origen transmits two separate lists,³ are replaced in Justin⁴ by twelve evil angels of Edem, the personifications of the twelve signs of the zodiac. The Gnostic Archons bear either the names of the Jewish angels, Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, etc., or the Jewish names of God himself: Jaldabaoth, Jao, Sabaoth, Adonai, Eloaios, Oraios, Astaphaios, which are also known from Greek magical papyri and from the Cabbala.⁵ The Gnostics vehemently attacked Judaism and relegated Jahweh to the position of a demiurge, the creator of evil in the world, a kind of Antichrist and the leader of the spirits of the stars. It is easily understood, therefore, how the Archons receive names that are exclusively Jewish. We possess no large-scale works of art, apart from a few paintings in the Roman Catacombs (which cannot be considered here) which provide an inkling of the dissolute fantasies entertained by the Ophites, Sethians, Carpocratians and Basilians, as these black sheep of early Christianity are called. There are only a multitude of engraved amulets which are known by the term Abraxas, or Gnostic gems. In his monumental work on ancient gem carving, Furtwängler⁶ estimates their artistic value at a very low level and states that the engravings were unpleasantly soft in style. This is possible: but they provide nevertheless in their haematite, jasper, onyx and carnelian engravings a particularly fascinating chapter on late classical culture

¹ *Ibid.*, VI, 33, v. 1, and Gundel, *Sterne und Sternbilder im Glauben des Altertums und der Neuzeit*, 1922, p. 158.

² W. Anz, *Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung des Gnostizismus*, Leipzig, 1897.

³ Origen, *op. cit.*, VI, 30; VI, 31.

⁴ W. Anz, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁵ Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, 1923, I, pp. 360-84.

⁶ W. Furtwängler, *Antike Gemmen*, 1900, p. 363.

and religion and they deserve a closer attention from historians of art than they have hitherto received.¹

What is characteristic of these gems—their bad workmanship apart—is that astral symbols, the stars, half moon, winged sun-disk, scarabs and zodiacal signs are combined with representations of the animal-headed Archons and Dekans. We reproduce one of them here (Pl. 16a): it bears a dog-headed figure holding a sceptre in each hand and standing between a half moon and a star,² with the name of the Ophite Archon Michael on the reverse side. Another gem,³ of the utmost importance for our purpose, shows a being combining the dog's (?) head of Anubis with the ass's head of Typhon and standing on two feet, one of which is the hooped foot of a calf.

Other Archons, like Jaldabaoth, combined the body of a man with the head of an ass or a cock and stood upon dragon's feet. It is only after all the material has been gathered together, examined and classified that we shall be able to trace the ancestry of some of these types. It seems, however, that some of the old Egyptian gods, Anubis, Toth, Horus, Khnumu, as well as the Dekans, may be their ancestors. Some may have their origin in Mithraic banquet reliefs, as, for instance, the lion-headed Archon crouched with rays of light;⁴ some have serpent heads, others the heads of bulls. Often they are armed with knives and lances in order to ward off occult powers, like their relatives of several centuries back, the seven sages of Babylon, and like them the abraxas gems and amulets serve as charms, particularly against the evil eye and sickness.

Judaism: Angels and the Inhabitants of the Heavens

As far as their common origin is concerned, the Gnostic Archons and Dekans were intimately connected with the Jewish hierarchy of angels. It is nowadays an accepted truth that the origins of the Jewish cherubim, ophanim and seraphim are to be sought for in Babylonia and Assyria on the one hand and in Mazdaism on the other.⁵

To the period of the Hittite domination of Canaan, somewhere between 1350 and 1150 B.C., belong the beautiful and delicately carved ivory reliefs from Megiddo near Haifa, which were published by Loud.⁶ They show that genii with the heads of animals were known and represented in Canaan. Such animal-headed genii were seen by the prophets during the Captivity on the palace walls and the temples in Babylonia. The most ancient Bib-

¹ There is, for instance, no work in which these gems are collected, scientifically described and adequately illustrated. I have been compelled to use in the course of this article old copper engravings like those of Gori-Passeri or Montfaucon. (Gori-Passeri, *Thesaurus gemmarum astriferarum*, Florence, 1750; B. de Montfaucon, *L'Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, Paris, 1719, II, 2nd part, pp. 353-61.) The only book that deals with this problem in a more than amateurish manner (C. W. King, *The Gnostics and Their*

Remains, London, 1887) appeared 62 years ago and has very poor illustrations.

² King, *op. cit.*, plate F, no. 2.

³ *Ibid.*, pl. G, no. 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pl. L, no. 2.

⁵ H. Gressmann, *Altorientalische Bilder zum A. T.*, 1927, no. 387, fig. 387; A. Kohut, *Jüdische Angelologie und Dämonologie*, 1886; M. Schwab, "Vocabulaire de l'angelologie," *Revue des études juives*, 1901.

⁶ G. Loud, "The Hittites at Megiddo?," *Mélanges Dussaud*, 1939, II, pp. 557-8.

lical books do not employ the expression "angel": the earliest appellation used in the Pentateuch to designate the messenger of God was *bene elohim* (sons of God), *sar* (prince). When heavenly visitants come to Abraham they are simply called "three men." The book of Job more clearly defines their nature: they are not as holy as God, but they are purer and holier than men. In another passage Job identifies them with the stars. In the book of Daniel, written under the influence of Persian religious ideas, where the Fravashis are thought of as stars, the angels, like a heavenly army, are ranged in military order.¹ In the book of Nehemiah (ix. 6) these heavenly armies are expressly called "the host of heaven" (οἱ στρατοὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν), but the first time we meet the expression "the powers of heaven" (δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν) is in the fourth chapter of Daniel. The most fruitful source of information concerning the nature, function, number, class and names of the angels is to be found in the Jewish apocrypha, particularly in the book of Henoch and in the apocalypse of Baruch which belong to the first and second century before Christ. We learn that the nature of the angels as well as that of the stars is fire² and that the splendour is comparable to that of the heavenly bodies. In the Ethiopian Henoch,³ the fallen angels are expressly co-ordinated with the stars. Apocryphal angelology provides fantastic, varied and manifold names for the angels with characteristics that recall definite cosmological and astral associations. They were called the angel of the glory of God⁴ (*doxa*), the angel of the glory (*khabod*), those who are his throne, angel of the elements (*stoicheia*, an expression employed in hermetic literature to designate the heavenly bodies), shining angels, heavenly hosts: those who are high up in the sky, the guardians, that is Archons, the spirits of light, the spirits of the elements, those with many eyes, that is to say, those who, like Argus, are clothed in stars. In the astronomical section of the Slavonic Henoch they have power to command the stars: they watch over the regulation of their orbits and over the phases of the moon: in short, they fulfil the functions ascribed by Horapollon to the mythical cynocephaloi, the Dekans of the Egyptian temples.⁵

But there is a great difference between the Jewish angels and the Gnostic Archons and Dekans. These latter are sinister, relentless companions and executors of the judgment of *Heimarmene* who suppress the free will of men. They are evil personifications of every vice and sin.⁶ In the Jewish conception, on the contrary, already clearly outlined in Philo⁷ and ultimately derived from Plato, the heavenly bodies are beneficent, intelligent beings with souls. This outlook, which the Neo-Platonists and particularly Plotinus⁸ express, is the foundation of Jewish angelology, astrology, magic and Cabbala. We shall return to this point later on. We possess no pictorial representations of the Jewish angels from the time of the earlier apocryphal writings, but several

¹ Kohut, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-3.

² Slavonic Henoch 29, 1; Ap. Baruch 51, 9.

³ Ethiopian Henoch 21, 6.

⁴ Bonsirven, *Le Judaïsme aux temps de Jésus Christ*, Paris, 1934, pp. 234-5.

⁵ Horapollon, *Hieroglyphica*, Engl. trans. by A. T. Cory, 1840, and Thorndike, *A History*

of Magic etc., 1923, I, p. 333.

⁶ R. Eisler, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

⁷ Philo, *De opificio mundi*, cap. XVIII, 50.

⁸ F. Saxl and E. Panofsky, in collaboration with R. Klibansky, *Saturn and Melancholy*, London in MS., and L. Thorndike, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 360-84.

descriptions and legends from the Midrash provide us with some wonderful material. Thus, we learn from the Baruch Apocalypse¹ that this pilgrim through the heavens saw a vast plain in the first heaven "and men dwelt there who had faces like cattle, horns like stags, feet like goats and haunches like lambs." These were the builders of the Tower of Babel. In the second heaven he saw men who had the appearance of dogs and the feet of stags. These were the men who had counselled the others to build the Tower of Babel. Here, manifestly under the influences of Gnosis, the Archon powers with animal heads are conceived as great sinners. Why, then, do they dwell in heaven?

We encounter a reminiscence of this passage in Jalkuth Reubeni.² There are, he says, in the seven worlds 365 kinds of men. On Tebhel (the name of the seventh world) there are some creatures who have a lion's head and a human body: others have serpents' heads and human bodies. Again: "On Tebhel are mountains and hills and 365 kinds of men: some have serpents' heads, others the heads of oxen." He employs, therefore, the definitely characteristic features of the Dekans combined with the 365 Monomoiriai who govern each a particular day of the solar year. I draw attention to these passages though they do not relate to angels but in one case to the sinful builders of Babel, in the second case to the legendary dwellers in the Septentriones (really the Monomoiriai), in order to show that these concepts had taken root and gained currency in orthodox Judaism. But this is not all. We possess in the Talmud certain descriptions of a powerful angel, a primeval spirit of great force, "whose voice rang through the whole universe," called Ridija. To him were subject all the lower and upper waters (Tehom). According to this Talmudic description (treatise Taanith) Rabba recounts: "I saw Ridija who is like the three-year-old calf, whose lips are parted asunder. He stands between the upper and the lower waters and says to the higher: 'pour out your waters': and to the lower: 'let your waters flow.'" Even in Judaism, therefore, beings of a superior kind, angels, were conceived in the form of an animal. Ridija, the arbiter of life-giving rain, was, like the star Tistriya in Persian religion (Vendidad 19, 26), conceived as a calf because in the zodiacal sign of Taurus, in early spring, the floodgates of water are opened and the fruitful rain streams down from the skies and the rivers overflow their banks.

But the angels were not merely described by the Jews as being animal-headed, they were also represented by them as such. There is an example on fol. 18r of a Hebrew Bible of the first half of the fourteenth century (Pl. 16c).³ In the miniature where the sacrifice of Isaac is illustrated, we see in the upper right-hand corner an angel, bearing an eagle's head, who takes hold of the knife wielded by Abraham in order to prevent the sacrifice of the child. From this example we are able to observe the unusual tenacity with which popular belief has clung to this concept over a long period. But other passages of the Talmud inform us that such ideas were regarded by the Rabbis as disturbing and perplexing. In the treatises Sukka and Chagiga the vision of Ezekiel was

¹ Trans. by E. Kautsch, 1900, II, p. 44.

² Fol. 2, col. 4.

³ Published by the present writer; it used

to be in Cracow but was destroyed during the war when all the Polish Synagogues with their wealth of monuments perished.

discussed and an interpolation in the text explains that the prophet had begged of God to change the countenance of one of the holy creatures in the Vision of the Throne from that of an ox into that of a cherub. This was done in order that Israel might not be reminded of the idolatrous worship of the golden calf in the desert. It is expressed in the phrase: "How shall the accuser be the defendant?" in other words: how can a holy being bear the appearance of the golden calf?¹ These official scruples did not prevent other teachers from describing the angel Ridija as a calf nor the illuminator of the Cracow Bible from representing the angel as having the head of an eagle. The conception that angels were hybrid creatures is also found in a Moses apocalypse published by Gaster: "With the other twain wings they cover their feet, for they have the feet of a calf. Who are these? And Metatron answered: 'These are the holy creatures.'"²

Jewish Art: Holy Persons and Patriarchs

We must now refer to a particularly interesting group of Jewish prayer books and Bibles which are closely connected with our subject. They are the productions of Jewish scribes and artists in Germany during the period between the second half of the thirteenth century and the middle of the fourteenth. We shall concern ourselves especially with the following manuscripts: the Milan Bible,³ the prayer book from the collection of David Kauffman now in the Academy of Sciences at Budapest, two prayer books for the liturgical year in the British Museum⁴ and one in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.⁵ These manuscripts have one thing in common: the characters from Holy Scripture and others also are represented as figures with animal and not human heads. The first in chronological order is the Milan Bible of the thirteenth century. It was first exhibited in 1933 and immediately set art historians a number of puzzles to unravel.⁶ In 1935 I published a study on the cryptic scene which illustrates fol. 135^v and 136^r of B. 32 inf.⁷ One page shows the seven planetary spheres as coloured concentric circles which contain, in the centre, the laughing faces of the sun and moon together with sixteen stars. In the four corners are the four "living creatures" (*zoa, chajjoth*), the four beasts of Ezekiel's vision, except that in place of the man, a cock is represented. It should be remembered that the Hebrew word for man can also mean a cock. The other page is divided by a horizontal line into two equal halves. In the upper part we see the three primeval animals preserved for the banquet of messianic days: the giant ox, Behemoth: the giant fish, Leviathan, and the giant bird, Ziz. These three beasts correspond to the three

¹ E. Bevan's interpretation of this passage (*Holy Images*, London, 1940, p. 55) is incorrect.

² *Gedulath Mosheh*, trans. by M. Gaster, London, 1893, pp. 130-5.

³ Ambrosiana, MS. B. 30. 31. 32. inf.

⁴ MSS. or. 22413 and 26896.

⁵ MS. Laud. or. 321.

⁶ F. Wittgens, "Illum. MSS. at the Ambrosiana," *Burlington Mag.*, LXIII, 1933, pp.

56-64, pl. 10; Paolo d'Ancona, "La Mostra della miniatura nella Bibl. Ambrosiana," *Bolletino d'Arte*, XXVII, 1933, p. 66, fig. 14.

⁷ Z. Ameisenowa, "Das messianische Gastmahl der Gerechten in einer hebräischen Bibel aus dem XIII Jh. Ein Beitrag zur eschatologischen Ikonographie bei den Juden," *Monatsschr. f. die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, LXXIX, 1935, pp. 409-22.

monsters of Persian mythology, Hadhayosh, Khar and Çaena-maergha. In the lower half (Pl. 16d) we see the banquet of the just. At a richly garnished table five persons are sitting: the first has an ass's head, the second has the head of an undefined beast of prey, the third, who is emptying a golden cup, an eagle's head, the fourth a lion's head and the fifth a bull's head. All these persons are luxuriously clad and bear golden crowns on their animal heads. In the forefront of the scene are three golden vessels filled with wine which has been pressed in Paradise and will be kept solely for the just. Two musicians play for those at table, the one on the left, standing beneath a tree, playing on a flute, the one on the right with a cat's head playing on a fiddle. In the light of the previous arguments it is now clearer why the just in Paradise should assume animals' heads. I have already mentioned above the ideas current in classical times which were later recorded by Origen, according to which men assume the forms of the astral deities who rule the decades of the ecliptic when, after death, they have passed through the planetary spheres. In the light of such ideas the animal masks of Mithraic mysteries become comprehensible. A similar case arises here, for the Jews must have been acquainted with these same ideas. Apart from its written heritage, Judaism had also a very ancient oral tradition. This oral teaching was passed on during the late classical period within the secret mystic groups and had its climax in the Cabbala.¹ Many ideas were not allowed to be discussed and taught in public, especially if they concerned the creation of the world or the vision of the throne: the rule was broken nevertheless.

Were the "prosopa" (faces) of the Dekans known to the Jews? It would seem that they were, for the relevant Dekan lists are contained in the *Testamentum Salomonis* which is Jewish in origin, though written in Greek. The description of their features must be quoted as it became the model for later representations. The Dekans introduce themselves to the great magician King Salomon as follows: "And I ordered another demon to appear. And there came to me the thirty-six principles (*stoicheia*), their leaders like unshapely dogs. Among them there were some in human shape, some in bull's shape, some with faces of beasts, some in the shape of serpents, some with faces of a sphinx or of birds. And to the question 'Who are you?' they answered: 'We are the thirty-six principles (or elements—*stoicheia*), the world-rulers of the darkness of this Aeon.'"²

But we are not only dependent on hypothesis. We are in a position to reconstruct the process which led to the identification of souls with angels and with the star-images. The first Jewish apocalypse is the book of Daniel. In it we find the source of this Jewish idea. "There shine the teachers like the brightness of heaven and the just like the stars for everlasting."³ From the Apocalypse of Ezra⁴ we learn that sinners will be punished in seven ways, but

¹ G. Scholem, *Major trends in Jewish Mysticism*, New York, 1941, *passim*.

² Καὶ ἐκέλευσα παρῆναι μοι ἕτερον δαίμονα. καὶ ἦλθον πρὸς με τὰ τριάκοντα ἑξ στοιχεῖα. αἱ κορυφαὶ αὐτῶν ὡς κύνες ἄμορφοι, ἐν αὐτοῖς δὲ ἦσαν ἀνθρωπόμορφα, ταυρόμορφα, θηριοπρόσωπα, δρακοντόμορφα, σφιγγοπρόσωπα, πτηνοπρόσωπα. καὶ ταῦτα ἰδὼν ἐγὼ Σολομῶν ἐπηρώτησα αὐτὰ λέγων· » καὶ

ὅμοις τίνες ἔστε « αἱ δὲ ὁμοθυμαδὸν μιᾷ φωνῇ εἶπον· » ἡμεῖς ἔσμεν τὰ τριάκοντα ἑξ στοιχεῖα, οἱ κοσμοκράτορες τοῦ σκότους τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου. (*Testamentum Salomonis*, XVIII, 1-2; ed. C. C. McCown, Leipzig, 1922, p. 51.)

³ Daniel xii. 1.

⁴ Ezra VI, 56 f. and A. Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 2nd ed., 1913, pp. 214-24.

the just, on the contrary, will shine like the sun and moon and be rewarded sevenfold.¹ Philo seizes on the idea which had originated in the East, had been incorporated into the teaching of the Pythagoreans, and developed by Plato in the *Timaeus* to the effect that if the soul leaves this world in a state of purity, it will be raised to the stars and be changed into a star. In his book *De somniis* Philo calls them "souls of the same number as stars."² Even the Fathers of the Church seem to support this opinion. Gregory the Great tries to prove, and he appeals to the Gospels for his argument, that the souls of the just are changed into stars.³ The Talmud has similar ideas about the appearance of the righteous after death: "The righteous will sit with crowns on their heads and enjoy the brightness of the majesty of God. They will be clad in his splendour and will be transformed." "The countenance of the just in the next world will shine like the sun and moon and the stars of heaven."⁴ Saadia Gaon, one of the most celebrated Jewish philosophers and mystics, holds that the soul surpasses the spheres in purity and that like them it absorbs light and radiates it again.⁵ Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai divides the just into seven categories and allocates to them the seven dwelling-places of Paradise. "These who shine will be like the sun or the moon or the stars or like the firmament, the lightning, the lilies or like the seven-branched candlestick of the Temple."⁶ Abraham ibn Daūd, a Spanish Aristotelian and a Jew, confirms our opinion. "The souls of men after death attain the rank of angels."⁷ The whole system is manifest only in man whose soul after death, and under certain conditions, becomes united with the spirits of the spheres, ". . . which are themselves forms of the spheres and stars." This is a lucid statement which declares in different terms the facts which Origen also had learned about the Gnostics, except that in this case "the spirits of the spheres" are not known to have assumed animal heads. That they were so represented in art, however, we shall show later. Important also for our purpose is the opinion of Nachmanides who assumes that the bodies of the innocent, the patriarchs and the great characters of rabbinical lore will undergo a transformation. As examples he adduces Moses, Joshua, Phineas, Rabbi Eliezer and all the just whose countenances will shine like the stars.⁸

All Jewish authorities, therefore, from Daniel to Maimonides, are unanimous in identifying the souls of the just with the stars and sometimes admit that they can assume after death the forms of astral spirits. We even know the mechanism which lay behind such transformations. M. Gaster has published the so-called *Gedulath-Mosheh* (The Revelation of Moses).⁹ Moses is in heaven and the following dialogue takes place: "And Metatron said: 'O Lord of the universe, Moses is not able to mount up to see the angels, for there are angels who are of fire whereas he is of flesh and blood.' God said: 'Go

¹ Ezra B. VI, 65 f.

² ψυχὰι ἰσάριθμον ἀστροῖς (I, 141). Cf. P. Capelle, *De luna, stellis, lacteo orbe, animarum sedibus*, Diss. Halle, 1917, and Cumont, *Le symbolisme funéraire des Romains*, 1942, *passim*.

³ *Moralia in Job*, XVII, 16.

⁴ Berachoth 17a.

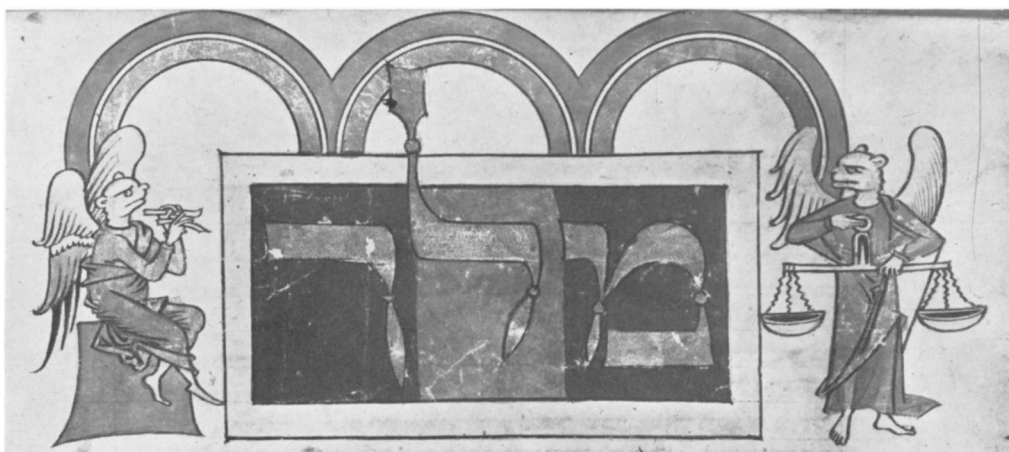
⁵ B. Templer, *Die Unsterblichkeitslehre bei den jüd. Philosophen des Mittelalters*, 1895, p. 213.

⁶ K. Kohler, *Heaven and Hell in Comparative Religion*, New York, 1923, p. 119.

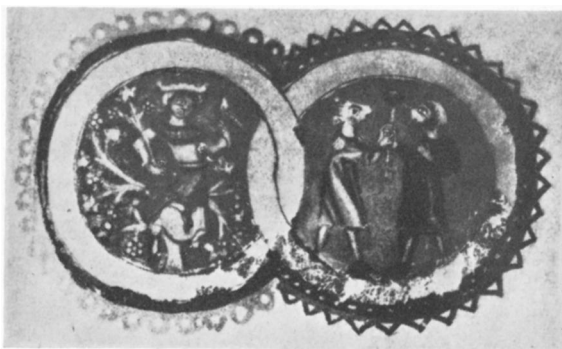
⁷ I quote D. Neumark, *Geschichte der jüdischen Philosophie im Mittelalter*, I, p. 576.

⁸ Baba Bathra 75a, Vajjikra Rabba par. 30.

⁹ M. Gaster, "The Revelation of Moses. Hebrew Visions of Hell and Paradise," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1893, p. 125.



a—Gabriel and Michael, Hebrew Prayer Book, *c.* 1300, Bodleian, MS. Laud. Or. 321, f. 166 (*p.* 31)



b—Month of May and Gemini, Hebrew Prayer Book, 14th cent., Budapest, Academy of Sciences (*p.* 32)



c—Gemini, Brit. Mus., MS. Or. 22413, f. 139 (*p.* 32)



d—Dekan, 15th cent., Cracow, Bibl. Jag., MS. 793, f. 382 (*p.* 32)



e—One of the Blessed with Etrog and Lulab, Brit. Mus., Or. 22413, f. 86 (*p.* 32)



f—St. John, Sacramentary of Gellone, 8th cent., Bibl. Nat., MS. Lat. 12048, f. 42

and change his flesh into fire.' And Metatron changed the tongue of Moses into a tongue of fire, and his eyes he made like the wheels of the heavenly chariot and his power like that of the angels, and his tongue like a flame, and brought him up to heaven." Here we have described in detail the change into a star and the transformation into a fiery angel-nature which is identical with that of the astral powers. But it is not only the unnamed righteous men who, after the coming of the Messiah in the unpredictable future, will partake of the heavenly banquet prepared for them since the six days of the creation—it is not they alone who will assume the forms of the spirits of the stars. The patriarchs of the Old Testament with their wives and particularly the holy women heroines of the hagiographical books of the Bible will share in this privilege. We see, for instance, on fol. 3v of British Museum MS. 22413, in the scene which depicts the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, that the living men—Moses, who receives the tables of the law to the sounds of heavenly trumpets, Aaron in his bishop's mitre and the seven men in his train—have human heads; whilst in contrast the women, who are dead—Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah—have animal heads. Similar details may be seen in the miniature reproduced here (Pl. 17) from the same manuscript which illustrates the book of Ruth. The British Museum MS. or. 22413 is a typical South German example of miniature painting of the first half of the fourteenth century. It shows the vivid colouring and strong modelling, the symmetrical composition and the flat ornamental treatment of plant details which distinguish this group of manuscripts from those belonging to the group under French influence. A blossoming tree with branches outspread like the arms of a candelabra divides the picture into two halves. On the right side stands Booz, the wealthy man from Bethlehem, who bears the head of an ass or a horse: near him stand his two servants, one with a rake, the other binding the sheaves, who, like normal human beings without particular merits or piety, and therefore not blessed or raised to the stars, are depicted with human heads. But Ruth, who is cutting the ripe corn with a sickle, has a cat's head, whilst the mother-in-law, Naomi, who is gleaning, has an eagle's head.

The prayer book of the British Museum is related to a prayer book in Oxford, Laud. or. MS. 321, which is magnificently illustrated and contains many Biblical scenes in which animal-headed blessed ones and patriarchs are involved. The miniature reproduced here (Pl. 18a) is connected with the feast of the New Year. On this day the merits and demerits of men are weighed in a scale and recorded by angels in a book. We read in an old Palestinian Midrash of the fourth century, the *Pesikta* of R. Kahana: "On the scales they ascend: with the scales, and in the month whose star is the scales, he works out their redemption. Which month is that? It is the month of Tishri."¹ On the left side we see the archangel Gabriel bearing an animal's head, ostentatiously displaying his writing implements, his quill pen and his scraping knife as if to say: "With this pen will your sins be copied down." On the right stands the archangel Michael with the balance, winged but animal-headed. We shall see that similar representations were not unknown to the Christian art of the early Byzantine period.

The Budapest prayer book contains many illustrations, one of them of

¹ Trans. by A. Wünsche, *Par. XXIII*, p. 218.

uncommon interest. It depicts the cosmic throne of Salomon, the steps and vaulting of which are supported by the nineteen animals of the luni-solar metonic cycle of the year.¹ As I want to deal with this manuscript in another connection I merely wish to mention here that two just men with animal heads are gazing on the throne, whilst nearby, horrible misshapen devils with human heads carry out their nefarious activities. As in almost all Hebrew prayer books certain prayers (for dew, rain, and those for the ninth day of Ab, on which the Temple was destroyed), are illustrated with one and sometimes several series of the signs of the zodiac. The zodiac pictures in MS. Laud. or. 321 reveal nothing out of the ordinary. On the other hand, the London MS. or. 22413, the Budapest Kaufmann MS. and the British Museum MS. or. 26896² (which has not yet been discussed) depict some signs of the zodiac in a very curious manner. The Gemini picture is, for our purpose, most informative. The normal representation of Gemini which is based on Greek classical models shows the figures of two naked boys holding hands or touching each other. But in the Budapest manuscript (Pl. 18b) we see, in a round medallion that is connected with another medallion containing the personification of the Gemini month of May, two animal-headed creatures standing opposite each other and holding a ball upon a staff, obviously a sceptre. The unusual form of these Gemini figures had already attracted the attention of T. Dombart who traced its origin to the Babylonian "Kudurru" which, perhaps, is going a little too far. As a matter of fact, it must derive from an early islamic representation of the two Dekans.³ The Twins on fol. 139 of the London prayer book (Pl. 18c) are represented as two eagle-headed men—an illustration which must have the same ancestry as the Budapest miniature. In this case we have a third member for comparison in the unique illuminated manuscript of the Latin translation of Picatrix (Pl. 18d).⁴ One of the Dekans is described as follows: "Forma hominis et caput avis." Another Dekan in the Cracow MS.⁵ has a lion's head. But what is remarkable is that in the London MS. or. 22413, fol. 86 (Pl. 18e), in an illustration of the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, one of the Blessed holding in his right hand a citrus fruit (Etrog) and in the left a bunch of palm leaves, has an eagle's head, exactly like the Twins of the zodiac. His large round bird's eyes shine with an ecstatic gleam—and not without reason. He is one of the Blessed belonging to messianic times who will enter into the re-erected "Hut of the Blessed," the "Sukkath Eden."⁶ The zodiac sign of the Twins, which was often described as Simeon and Levi, appears to have held a special importance for the Jews. In a Midrash we read: "Rabbi Nehorai began: It is written in Ezechiel 19, 'in the third month.' Why in the third month? Because the star of the third month is the star of men. The only star, among all stars, that is connected with men, is Gemini." It is not surprising that this zodiacal sign which played such an important part in the destiny of man should be modelled on a picture

¹ R. Eisler, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

² See above p. 28.

³ T. Dombart, "Eine bedeutsame Darstellung des Tierkreisbildes der Zwillinge," *Festschrift G. Leidinger*, 1930, pp. 47-9.

⁴ Cracow, Biblioteka Jagiellonska MS.

793, fol. 382.

⁵ *Ibid.*, fol. 375.

⁶ R. Wischnitzer-Bernstein, "Die messianische Hütte in der jüdischen Kunst," *Monatschrift f. d. Geschichte u. Wissenschaft des Judentums*, 1936, p. 377.

of the Dekans and invested with their faces. There was a time when, in Jewish belief, the innocent, blessed and just souls were transformed into stars and represented in the shape of rulers of the spheres. On this point, I am in agreement with the opinion of two great scholars, Steinschneider and Gundel. Gundel says: "The theory that man can be transformed into a Dekan god finds an echo in the penitent words of Pistis Sophia: And I became like a Dekan who finds himself 'solitary in the sky.' This is probably connected with the thirty-six righteous men who, according to the Talmud, gaze daily upon the face of God without whom the world cannot exist."¹ The passage of the Talmud to which Gundel refers in this remark, runs as follows: "Abaje says that the universe has no less than thirty-six saintly men who daily contemplate the countenance of God, for it is said: 'Happy are they who hope in Him,' and the cabbalistic number of the word 'lo' (Him) is thirty-six." But there is more evidence of this connection. Steinschneider mentions a mediaeval Jewish Book of Fate in Munich.² In it, each of the zodiacal signs is divided into three faces, and the names of the authorities to whom the answers are attributed are all taken from the Bible: they are, Adam, Henoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Aaron, Moses, Joshua, Othniel and the other judges: also, Manasses, Samuel, Joel, David, Nathan, Zadoc, Solomon, Elias and so on: finally there are Hananiah, Mischael, Azariah, Daniel and Ezra. The classic number thirty-six of the Dekans, the designation "faces," and the assignment of a third of each sign of the zodiac to the blessed absolves us from any further demonstration that the animal-headed persons in Hebrew manuscripts of German provenance from the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century, are to be traced to Dekan star-spirits.

I must now try to answer the question why particularly in Germany and from the thirteenth century onwards, Hebrew Bibles and liturgical manuscripts were illustrated with zoomorphic figures of the just and the patriarchs. There is good reason for this. In Germany and particularly on the Rhine, there arose in the thirteenth century that mystical, often messianic, element in Jewish spiritual writings which nowadays goes by the name of German Chassidism or German Cabbala. The instigator of this movement was R. Eleazar ben Juda of Worms, a scion of the celebrated family of scholars, the Kalonymedes of Lucca, whose literary tradition reached back into the ninth century. His life covered the first forty years of the thirteenth century. He is the author of a *Gematria*, that is, a treatise dealing with the symbolism of numbers, of a work on angels and of a commentary on the book of Jezira which was the main document of the older cosmological mysticism. This Eleazar ben Juda initiated the first wave of German Chassidism. Gerhard Scholem, writing on Cabbala and Jewish mysticism, shows that the literature of German Chassidism in many cases absorbed the heritage of Babylonia, but without the Gnostic elements which have been to a large extent eliminated,

¹ Gundel, *Dekane etc.*, p. 75 and p. 260, note 2.

² Cod. Hebr. Monac. 228; M. Steinschneider, "Über Mondstationen und das Buch Arkandam," *Ž. d. dtsh. Morgenländ. Ges.*,

XVIII, p. 146, no. 37. In the book of Bahir (*Das Buch Bahir*, ed. G. Scholem, 1923, par. 61-4) we read about the 36 "Regents" or "Powers," which are all "perfect in their heart."

others having been substituted in their stead.¹ The new element in the movement is the Neo-Platonism transmitted by the writings of Saadia Gaon. It is significant that these mystics recognize their indebtedness to the East.² But the most interesting fact from our point of view is that, according to Scholem, in most of the unprinted and manuscript treatises "the terminology of the Gnostics regarding aeons is preserved unchanged: the seven Archons of the planets surprisingly and suddenly reappear in mediaeval Jewish circles but in a form which shows that the original conception, a focal point of Gnostic teaching, had already become vague." Jewish theological speculation, under the influence of Philo's Platonism and whilst still in the schools of Alexandria and Palestine, gave to the pessimistic and fatalistic doctrines of Gnosis, and particularly to the sinister and sinful influences of the Archons of the planets, a definite eudaimonic twist. The Archons were accordingly transformed into angels and archangels, ministers of the only divine will, and their nature was fashioned to keep in harmony with the life-affirming character of monotheism. This fact gained visual expression in representations which invested the blessed and the patriarchs with the outward semblances of animal-headed astral deities, an idea which may have been introduced into Germany with the widely diffused and widely read writings of Saadia Gaon. The Gnostic Dekans and Archons still preserve their ancient *prosopa*, but their symbolism has radically changed. They became once again what they had originally been at their first appearance in history—the sinless, pure souls of the just who had been transformed into the immaterial spirits of the spheres.

Christian Art: Evangelists

Intimately bound up with our theme is the strange iconographical motif that slipped, rather surprisingly, into the Christian series of images. I refer to the Evangelists with the heads of their symbolic animals. The origin of this representation can be traced to the vision of Ezekiel and to its derivative in the Apocalypse of St. John. We have to choose here between an anthropomorphic representation of the *symbols* of the four Evangelists, as they were called in an article that appeared shortly before the war,³ and the denomination: *Evangelists with heads of animals on human bodies*. These are often placed in the four corners of a rectangle, in the centre of which Christ sits enthroned. That we are really dealing with the four Evangelists is obvious from the fact that they are very often sitting at their desks and writing.⁴ We must also distinguish between the representation of the animal-headed Evangelists and that of the tetramorph, the fantastic apparition of a cherub which appeared to the prophet Ezekiel on the banks of the river Chobar and which seems to be a reminiscence of some works of art extant in his lifetime. The two motives have naturally much in common and remain connected with each other. The tetra-

¹ G. Scholem, *Zur Frage der Entstehung der Kabbala. Sonderdruck aus dem Korrespondenzblatt des Vereines zur Gründung einer Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Berlin, 1928, p. 11.

² Scholem, *op. cit.*, p. 21 f.

³ A. M. Friend, jnr., "The Canon Tables

of the Book of Kells" in *A. Kingsley-Porter Memorial Volume*, 1939, II, pp. 611-66.

⁴ Illustrated in W. Cook, "Early painted panels of Catalonia (IV)," *Art Bulletin*, 1925-1926, p. 195 ff., figs. 16 and 19.

morph has been studied by Oscar Wulff in a work that still contains some valuable material, and by Neuss in his excellent monograph¹: the animal-shaped Evangelists have been subject to the attention of other scholars.² But their observations are concerned almost exclusively with the formal aspect of the representation, with its geographical diffusion and its date. Apart from Neuss, who brings a profound theological knowledge to bear on his iconographical studies, few art historians have taken the trouble to enquire why and how such unusual Evangelist types came into existence and what this peculiarity signifies. The extraordinary hybrid, half-animal, half-human form of the Evangelists must have caused consternation to many believers and in this lies the essence of the whole matter. Here, assistance comes to the art historian from the theologians and philologists with cultural and historical interests.

Two works in particular, one by Boll, the other by the Benedictine Landersdorfer, lead us to a right understanding of this complicated question.³ The starting-point of our enquiry must be the first vision of Ezekiel (cap. i, 4 f.). Magnificent though the prophet's vision is who believes that he saw God in a fiery chariot drawn through the heavens by four strange animal-headed cherubim, yet it is hardly comprehensible. Generations of theologians have laboured at the emendation and elucidation of this difficult and corrupt text in the attempt to make a realistic conception of it acceptable. But Ezekiel's dark and solemn words defy grammatical and philological exegesis. There is no simple way of explaining on a physical and logical level how these "wheels within wheels" go round, how the four living creatures move and what is really happening here. The Jews chose another method of explanation—the allegories of Philo of Alexandria in late classical times, mystical contemplation in later centuries. The favourite theme of all Jewish mystics since the time of Hillel has been the vision of Merkaba, the divine chariot. Sitting motionless for hours on a stretch, with eyes closed and with all their faculties turned inward upon themselves, these Jewish yogis fancied they saw bodily before their gaze the majesty of God enthroned upon his chariot. Such practices were strictly against the law,⁴ but they were eagerly indulged in, and this gave rise to stories that these searchers after God were devoured by fire from heaven because of their unsanctioned attempt to penetrate into the divine mysteries.

One point concerning the vision of Ezekiel is obvious at first sight even to the uninitiated. It is that we are dealing with the theophany of a cosmic God in a four-horse chariot, set in circular motion by primeval powers,

¹ O. Wulff, *Cherubim, Throne, Seraphim*, Altenburg, 1894, pp. 27-48; W. Neuss, *Das Buch Ezechiel in Theologie und Kunst*, Bonn, 1912.

² C. Cahier, *Nouveaux Mélanges d'Archéologie*, Paris, 1874, pp. 108-13; H. Janitschek, *Die Trierer Adahandschrift*, 1889, p. 69, n. 3; E. Mâle, *L'Art religieux en France au XII^e siècle* 1922, p. 5, figs. 5 and 6; W. Cook, *op. cit.*, and A. M. Friend, jnr., *op. cit.*; K. Künstle, *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst*, 1926, I,

p. 609.

³ F. Boll, *Aus der Offenbarung Johannis*, Bonn, 1914; S. Landersdorfer, O.S.B., *Baal Tetramorphos*, Paderborn, 1918; R. Eisler, *Weltenmantel und Himmelszelt*, 1910, I, p. 432; Dornseiff, "Das Rotasopera-Quadrat," *Ztschr. f. d. neutestamentl. Wissenschaft*, 1938, XXXVI, p. 222.

⁴ G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, New York, 1941, *passim*.

cherubs who are half animal in appearance. All the accessories and sounds, the fiery wheels, the lightning, the roaring of the wind, the crystal and sapphire stone of the firmament, the eyes in the felloes of the wheels and on the bodies and wings of the cherubs: all these speak only too clearly. It is generally accepted nowadays that eyes in oriental mythology can only signify stars,¹ analogous to the seven eyes of God, the planets, which are specified by the Bible; Secharia speaks of the keystone of the vault of the temple where are the seven eyes which cover the universe with their sweeping glance. The scholars already mentioned have fundamentally reached the same conclusion, namely, that beneath the bull, lion, human and eagle faces of the cherubs are concealed the zodiacal signs of the solstices and equinoxes and perhaps the four main elements of matter. The bull represents earth, the lion fire, the eagle air, and the man water: they are the zodiacal signs of the four cardinal points (separated from each other by 90 degrees on the ecliptic) of the bull, the lion, the aquarius man and of the fourth, the eagle, the brightest star of the constellation of Pegasus² (exchanged at some unknown period for the ominous scorpion). Thus, in the prophecy of Ezekiel, Jahweh is represented as the God of the Universe: his throne is the expanse of heaven, his chargers are the zodiacal signs of the solstices and equinoxes. This interpretation agrees with the words of Isaiah lxvi. 1: "The whole heaven is my throne." It was thus, apparently, that the author of the apocalypse of St. John understood the vision of Ezekiel. Later plastic representations lead us to believe that the consciousness of the cosmic implications of the vision of Ezekiel was of long standing. It is obvious in the wonderful tetramorph of the Winchester Bible where the hubs of the wheels are the faces of the sun and moon and the feet of the tetramorph rest on the zodiacal sign of the bull. The Ezekiel illustration in the Bible of Lobbes in Tournai, written in 1084,³ also shows a consciousness of the connection with the spheres of heaven. That Ezekiel's vision bears traces of remembered images and that it definitely has connections with a sculpture which was probably to be seen in the Temple of Jerusalem in Ezekiel's day, has been pointed out by Father Landesdorfer in an excellent paper which has unfortunately not received the attention which it deserves. Landesdorfer discovered in early Christian Syrian writers several accounts of a God who had four faces: these accounts, it appeared, derive from the same source.⁴ At the same time he came upon another passage in the Peschitta,⁵ one of the Syriac versions of the Bible, which ran as follows: "and he (Manasses, the King) caused an idol to be made having four faces and he placed it in the house of the Lord."⁶ Midrash Debarim Rabba confirms this statement: "with the entrance of Manasses into the Holy of Holies all Israel was made unclean, for he caused to be made an idol having four faces and he brought it into the Temple."⁷ Basing his argument on several diverse pieces of evidence, the Benedictine scholar established that this monument was a

¹ H. Jacoby, "Zur Erklärung der Kerube," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, XIX, 1923, pp. 256-65, and F. Boll, *op. cit.*, p. 36 ff.; R. Pettazzoni, "Le corps parsemé d'yeux," *Œlmoxis*, I, 1938, pp. 1-12.

² Boll, *op. cit.*, p. 36 ff.

³ Reproduced in Neuss, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁵ Chron. ii. 33-7.

⁶ Landesdorfer, *op. cit.*, p. 8 ff.

⁷ Par. II, cap. III, 23.

copy of the four-faced Baal Tetramorphos, which was probably of Phoenician origin. It was brought into the Temple three times and was three times removed, first in the days of Manasses, then of Josiah and finally of King Ahab. It would have been possible for Ezekiel, who made his prophecy between the years 590-570 B.C., to have seen the idol in place before he was taken into captivity. Midrash Debarim has more to say regarding the four faces of Baal and connects them with the four cosmic winds which blow from the four quarters of the globe. But we possess another precious piece of evidence in another Midrash where, in connection with the four quarters of the earth and the four cherubim of Ezekiel, the following statement is made: "On the first solstice, Nissan, the Seraphim, will be strong: on the second solstice, Tammuz, the Bull, will be strong: on the third solstice, Tebeth, the bird Ziz, will be strong (identical with the solar eagle and with the Simurgh of the Parsees):¹ on the fourth solstice, Leviathan (representative of the element of water) will be strong." This passage taken from the fourth-century Pesikta of R. Kahana confirms the accuracy of the cosmological interpretation of Ezekiel's vision. It is certain, therefore, that about the turn of the seventh to the sixth century before Christ, Jahweh was worshipped by an idolatrous King under the image of a tetramorph Baal of Phoenicia, that is as a God of the sky, and that the four faces conform to the visions of Ezekiel and John.² That this was so is borne out by a Greco-Phoenician myth quoted by the Christian apologist Athenagoras.³ It recounts that water was the first of the four elements to be created. From it was engendered a dragon having a lion's head and a bull's head; in the centre it had the face of the God, probably, therefore, a human face, "whose name is Herakles-Chronos." It is therefore a combination of a solar hero, corresponding to Gilgamesh of the Babylonian epic, and a god of time, the lion-headed Aion-Chronos.⁴ The results of Landersdorfer's enquiry allow us to reconstruct the true facts of the case: in Phoenicia there was a cosmic Baal represented by a four-faced idol looking towards the four quarters of the globe. These four faces were those of a bull, a lion, a man and a dragon. This idol of Baal was brought to Jerusalem some time in the eighth century, erected in the forecourt of the Temple and worshipped in place of El-Jahweh to whom it was related as the ruler of the universe, sky, year and time. There is great probability that Ezekiel saw it there between 593-586 and was greatly impressed. But as a firm adherent of monotheism, Ezekiel divested the four-faced cherub of its divine dignity and made of it the vehicle of the godhead, the cosmic throne in which the four zodiacal signs and the four main elements of creation lie concealed. We have dwelt at some length on this vision of Ezekiel because with its help we can come to a fuller understanding of the animal-headed Evangelists.

At a very early date, for the first time in the works of Irenaeus⁵ (second century A.D.), the number symbolism of four is applied to the cherubim, the

¹ Cf. my study, "Das messianische Gastmahl der Gerechten," fig. 2.

² Landersdorfer, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

³ *Legatio pro christianis*, c. 18. Migne, PG VI, p. 928.

⁴ R. Eisler, *Weltenmantel und Himmelszelt*, I, p. 439; Landersdorfer, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

⁵ *Adversus haereticos* III, XI, 8. Dornseiff, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

four winds, the cardinal virtues and the Evangelists, to which were added the four rivers of Paradise and the four (major) prophets of the Old Testament. At first the animal symbols of the Evangelists were represented above or below the canon-tables of the gospels or in panels specially reserved for this purpose, either side by side with the Evangelists or by themselves. In the early Irish manuscripts, these symbols form the most important decorative element. Parallel with this type another type developed in which the symbols occupy the corners of the page whilst Christ sits enthroned in the centre. In the seventh-century codex Amiatinus from Jarrow which is now in the Laurenziana at Florence, two of the symbols seem to support the seven spheres of heaven with their heads whilst the four Evangelists occupy the corners of the rectangle. The most ancient dated example of the symbols is found in a miniature of the Rabula codex, a manuscript written in the monastery of Zagba in Mesopotamia in the year 586. In this illumination, Christ hovers over the bodies of the four living creatures, a proof that already in the sixth century, the Evangelists were interpreted as the chariot of Christ—*quadriga Domini*.¹ That there existed an even earlier representation seems confirmed by an ancient Christian legend.² The martyr Theodosius, a lector in Thessalonica about A.D. 300, is said to have received in his dream a miraculous ring from God with a stone on which was engraved an image of the creator "as the giver" and in the corners of which were representations of the four *stoicheia*. Since this Greek word means both element and constellation it is not impossible that it refers here to the representation of the four Evangelist symbols which, at that time, were generally interpreted in patristic exegesis as corresponding to the four elements. The ring was said to heal incurable diseases at a distance. We find, then, that just as amulets engraved with the representations of the Gnostic Archons possessed a magic power, so did Christian rings bearing the images of the four elements. The Evangelists were compared by Irenaeus to "the four columns upon which the church rests which breathe immortality in every direction and animate men." Jerome (347-420) agrees on the whole with the explanation given by Origen (middle of the third century) and has something of interest to say about the vision of Ezekiel.³ The four animals, according to him, are the totality of intelligent creatures in the universe: they are the four powers of the soul—intellect, will, appetite and conscience. God is the macrocosmos and governs all four creatures, each of whom is a microcosmos. They are the symbols of the four elements from the mixture of which the whole universe is made. The wheels symbolize the process of combining the elements, or the course of the year which, with its fourfold partition into the four seasons, always describes the same cycle like a wheel within a wheel. Jerome also understands the four animals to be the image and symbol of the four Evangelists. He ends his comparison with the following words:⁴ "Matthaeus, Marcus, Lucas, Johannes quadriga Domini et verus cherubim, quod inter-

¹ Illustration of the Codex Amiatinus in A. Böckler, *Abendländische Miniaturen*, 1930, Pl. 12; the Rabula Codex miniature in O. Wulff, *Altchristliche und byzantinische Kunst*, 1914, p. 295, fig. 298.

² F. Piper, *Mythologie der christlichen Kunst*, 1851, II, p. 93.

³ Neuss, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-8.

⁴ Lib. I, p. 280.

pretatur scientiae multitudo." These last two words are a direct borrowing from Philo's work on the cherubim.

Gregory the Great was also of the opinion that the four animal-faced cherubim of Ezekiel symbolize the Evangelists,¹ and this was reflected in the liturgy of the Catholic Church. On the feast of the Evangelists, as we learn from the lectionaries of the twelfth century,² the text of Ezekiel i. 10-14 was read aloud. General acceptance of the four living creatures as Evangelist symbols, as true cherubs and possessors of "scientiae multitudo," led to their wide diffusion in Christian art, particularly as illuminations of the Gospels. But even earlier than this, we find representations of them in early Christian mosaics, in the apse of S. Pudenziana in Rome³ for example, and on the vault of the church of S. Giovanni in Fonte at Naples, where, above the Evangelist symbols, hover five stars.⁴ The type of Evangelist representations which most closely concerns us here is, however, the zoomorphic figure—human but with an animal head. They, too, have an ancient ancestry.

In 1889 Janitschek proposed the theory that the Evangelists bearing the heads of their symbols originated in Syria.⁵ I am rather inclined to follow Oscar Wulff's and Emile Mâle's opinion that they first made their appearance in Coptic art which did not lack models on Egyptian soil for such hybrids, and in which animal-headed creatures are numerous enough not to cause consternation.⁶ The accuracy of Mâle's and Wulff's thesis is borne out by the early appearance and wide diffusion of such zoomorphic Evangelists in countries influenced directly or indirectly by Coptic art—Visigothic Spain, the South of France during the Merovingian period, and Ireland.⁷ In Germany, North France and Italy, the zoomorphic Evangelists do not appear before the Romanesque period. One of the earliest examples is found in the Sacramentary of Gellone (second half of the eighth century), where the Evangelists appear standing in full figure (Pl. 18f).⁸ From roughly the same period comes the illustration in the Orosius manuscript of Laon.⁹ The picture of animal-headed Evangelists on the first page of the Book of Kells¹⁰ is unfortunately now in such a bad state of preservation as to make its reproduction difficult: I refer the reader to Friend's description and reproduction of it and the important conclusion that he reaches.¹¹ The miniature in the Book of Kells is incomplete; it was most probably copied from an earlier model, in which the Evangelists were grouped in two pairs presenting their gospels

¹ Cf. Bäumer, *Geschichte des Breviers*, 1893, p. 337.

² Neuss, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

³ Illustrated in O. Wulff, *op. cit.*, Pl. XIX, 1.

⁴ Wulff, *op. cit.*, p. 325, fig. 299.

⁵ *Die Ada Handschrift*, p. 69, note 3.

⁶ O. Wulff, *Die altchristliche und byzantinische Kunst*, 1914, p. 129; E. Mâle, *op. cit.*, p. 11, figs. 5-6.

⁷ The reader will find most of the relevant material collected and reproduced in the works of G. Micheli, *L'enluminure du haut moyen-âge et les influences irlandaises*, 1939, Pls. 143-5, and H. Zimmermann, *Vorkarolingische*

Buchmalerei, 1916, for the Irish manuscripts and those under Irish influence; for the Spanish, Catalan and Southern French manuscripts, see W. Cook, *op. cit.*, *Art Bulletin*, VIII, 1925-6; A. M. Friend, jnr., *op. cit.*, *Kingsley Porter Memorial Volume*, II, p. 611 ff., also gives a list of manuscripts.

⁸ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. lat. 12048, fol. 42.

⁹ Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. lat. 137.

¹⁰ Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS. A. 1. 6.

¹¹ Cf. Friend, *op. cit.*

to Christ enthroned. From this we must draw the conclusion that the Irish manuscripts which, until recently, were considered to furnish the oldest representation of animal-headed Evangelists were already in the eighth century imitating earlier models. With the gospel of Landevennec (Brittany), now in New York, Morey grouped a series of Breton manuscripts which illustrate the diffusion of this Evangelist type in the ninth century.¹ This group, which bears traces of definite Irish influence, shows the Evangelists standing not in pairs but individually, and extremely formalized.² A remarkable difference occurs in a manuscript of this group now in Boulogne³ where the Evangelist Mark is represented with the head of a horse instead of that of a lion. In Spain there are numerous manuscripts belonging to the period between the ninth to the twelfth century; apart from copies of the gospels, there were the Apocalypse commentaries of Beatus to provide a favourable field for the employment of Evangelist figures.⁴ We find them also in a copy of Gregory's *Moralia*⁵ which was written in Baleranica near Burgos about 945, with the feet of the zoomorphic Evangelists covered by whirling sun disks (Pl. 19a). A similar motif is repeated in the Apocalypse of Astorga, in which the zoomorphic Evangelists rotate on sun disks round the image of the Lamb (Pl. 19b). The whole scene is encompassed by a sphere of stars which reveals, as Baltrušaitis points out, "qu'il s'agit là encore d'un monde celeste."⁶

In an English drawing made at Durham about 1150 (Pl. 19c),⁷ Mark is writing on his roll; Luke raises his bull's head aloft and points to his parchment, whilst receiving from the outstretched hand of God above divine inspiration for his work: Matthew and John receive their gospels from the hands of two chubby-faced heavenly messengers who betray their descent from the personification of the winds. Nowhere in any of the earlier manuscripts is the fact that the Evangelists are portrayed with the heads of their symbols made more unmistakable than in this beautiful drawing where the writers are shown at their work.⁸ The celebrated Winchester Bible contains drawings of a similar character.⁹ From the early thirteenth-century examples I have reproduced a page from a prayer book belonging to the diocese of Bâle (Pl. 19d) in which the cross is shown as the Tree of Life and Christ is supported by God the Father.¹⁰ The four corners are occupied by the four zoomorphic Evangelists who hold the elliptic mandorla, that is to say, the vault of heaven, with both hands. As a curiosity I publish an illustration to Ezekiel i. 4 from the thirteenth-century Hebrew Bible, now in the Ambrosian Library at Milan (Pl. 20b),¹¹ which is an evident imitation of the Christian representation of the animal-headed Evangelists. Why the artist who illustrated the three-

¹ E. K. Rand, C. H. Kraeling, C. H. Morey, *The Gospel Book of Landevennec*, 1931; and G. Micheli, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-9.

² Micheli, *op. cit.*, figs. 143, 144, 145.

³ *Ibid.*, fig. 145.

⁴ Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 208 ff.

⁵ *Moralia in Job*, Madrid, Bibl. Nac.

⁶ Jurgis Baltrušaitis, "Roses de vents et roses de personnages," *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, Vol. 80, p. 271, fig. 10.

⁷ Durham A. IV 10, fol. 1; R. Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts*, Oxford, 1939, No. 151.

⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 87.

⁹ Fols. 169 and 189.

¹⁰ H. Swarzenski, *Die lateinischen Hss. d. XIII Jhr. in den Ländern am Rhein, Main und Donau*, 1936, fig. 470.

¹¹ MS. B. 32. inf.



a—Vision of Isaiah, with Evangelists, Gregory, *Moralia*, 10th cent., Madrid, Bibl. Nac., MS. Vitr. 13, 2, f. 2 (p. 40)



b—Christ and the Evangelists, Apocalypse MS., 12th cent., Manchester, John Rylands Library (p. 40)



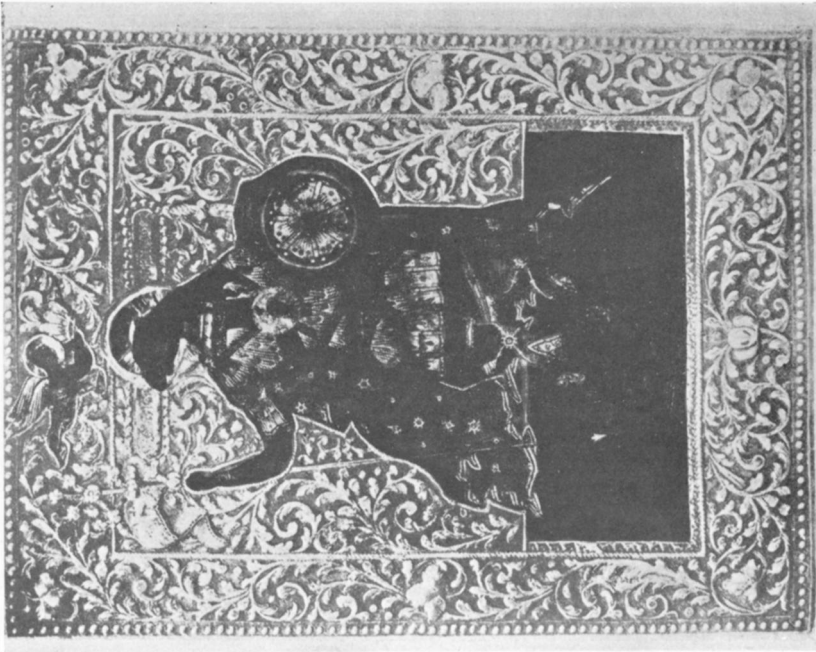
c—Christ and the Evangelists, 12th cent., Durham Cathedral, A. IV. 10, f. 1 (p. 40)



d—Christ and the Evangelists, Prayer Book, 13th cent., St. Gall, MS. 402, (p. 40)



b—The Vision of Ezekiel, Hebrew Bible, 13th cent., Ambrosiana, MS. B. 32 inf. (p. 40)



c—St. Christopher, Russian Ikon, 17th cent., Leningrad (p. 43)



a—The Evangelists as Millers, Gradual, 15th cent., Lucerne, Kantonsbibl., P. Msc. 19 fol., f. i (p. 41)

volumed Bible with such interesting pictures, among them this miniature of the messianic banquet of the just, pictured only three "chajjoth" with the faces of the lion, the man and the bull, and depicted an animal of prey with sharp claws and gleaming eyes instead of the usual eagle-headed creature, is a puzzle to me. He seems to some extent to have disregarded the tradition, for elsewhere he also substituted a cock's head for the human head.¹ We meet the most puzzling and complicated representation, however, in a little-known manuscript of a later period—the beginning of the fifteenth century.² It is a Gradual which formerly belonged to the monastery of Gnadenthal and came originally from the Cistercian Abbey of St. Urban. This manuscript is of great artistic importance, being to all appearances Bohemian, though the editor considers that its provenance is Alsace and that it merely shows traces of Bohemian influence, a judgment that seems debatable. On the first folio (Pl. 20a), in the initial letter A (Ad te levavi animam meam) for the Introit of the first Sunday in Advent, we see a mill for grinding the wheat that is destined to be made into hosts. The four Evangelists bearing the heads of their symbols are depicted as millers. They pour the grain (their Gospels) on to the mill shaft and the mill wheel is set in motion by the Apostles. The hosts fall into a chalice which the four Fathers of the Church hold in their hands and from which the child Jesus emerges. All the estates of mediaeval society adore the child. The four corners of the initial are occupied by the four prophets of the Old Testament, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jonah and Jeremiah. The representation of this mill for hosts is not uncommon in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century art of Northern Europe. But it is unusual that, at this late date, the Evangelists should be portrayed with the heads of animals.

Origen, and particularly Jerome, accepting Philo's interpretation of the cherubs above the Ark of the Covenant as meaning "fullness of knowledge," identified the central figure in John's vision with the Logos and the four living creatures with the Evangelists. We can trace the evolution of the four cherubs and the four animal-faced spirits of the elements which were yoked to the chariot of the God of the Jews from the cosmic Baal Tetramorphos of the Phoenicians whose four faces of zodiacal animals corresponded to the four quarters of the globe and the four cardinal points of the year. These creatures were spiritualized in Christian theological speculation and raised to a different plane. In the beautiful Carolingian miniatures,³ the animals, possessing "the fullness of knowledge" and being the channels of divine intuition, inspire the Evangelists as they gaze up towards heaven. From signifying the four physical elements of earth, water, fire and air, their symbolic content was transformed into meaning the elements of Christian teaching: the Gospels, which are the four columns upon which the Church rests, and which represent unity in multiplicity insofar as the four versions proclaim, in their concordance, the one word of the life and death of Christ.

¹ Cf. my study, "Das messianische Gastmahl der Gerechten," fig. 1.

² J. Schmid, *Les plus belles miniatures des Bibliothèques Suisses*, I, Lucerne, 1947, pp. 23-

27.

³ A. Goldschmidt, *Die deutsche Buchmalerei*, I, Pls. 20 and 27.

Christian Art: St. Christopher

The last link in the chain of this argument is the dog-headed image of Saint Christopher, one of the fourteen Auxiliary Saints. He was an extremely popular saint in the Middle Ages and because to gaze upon him meant protection from sudden death, his image was represented on a big scale on all the gates of cities, on bridges and at the entrance of churches in order that it might be seen afar off. All scholars who have worked on the life and passion of this kindly giant are agreed that this saint, whose feast is celebrated in the Greek Church on the 9th May and in the Roman calendar on the 25th July, never existed.¹

The legend of Saint Christopher is a very complex and purely literary fabrication without any historical foundation. In the Gnostic "Acts of Saint Bartholomew," a document which originated in fourth-century Egypt, we read of a certain Christianus, a cynocephalus and anthropophagus, who after his conversion by Saint Bartholomew offered his services to the Apostle in his missionary labours in Parthia.² His name was changed from Christianus to Christopher, a descriptive name by which many other saints and martyrs were called, and his half-human, half-animal figure was enriched by many of those features which are the common property of a great number of legends. It is said that he was miraculously converted by Christ in a shower of rain, that, being convinced that Christ was more powerful than the Devil, he resisted Dagnus the mythical King of an unknown city called Samon, who attempted to induce him to offer pagan sacrifices, that in prison he was tempted by two women of doubtful character whom he converted, was tortured on several occasions and finally beheaded. Both as Christianus in the *Acts of Bartholomew* and as Christopher in the sixth-century *Passio* he was described as having a dog's head. From the middle of the fifth century onwards the cult is traceable in Bithynia,³ mainly through inscriptions. During the reign of Justinian an icon of St. Christopher with the dog's head was to be found in a monastery of Mount Sinai. His cult spread at a very early period throughout Egypt, Syria, and Palestine and from there it found its way into Sicily some time during the sixth century. In the "Hermeneia" of the Book of Mount Athos, which was written quite late but the tradition of which dates from the late Byzantine epoch, we find the following phrase: "Christophoros the reprobate, one of the cynocephaloi."⁴

The earliest oriental representations of Saint Christopher certainly showed him with a dog's head. Much later, two other types came into fashion: the young warrior clothed in military garments, and during the twelfth and

¹ K. Richter, *Der deutsche Christoph*, Berlin, 1895-8, parts II-IV, in *Acta German.*, I, 1898; K. Zwierzina, *Die Legenden der Märtyrer vom unzerstörbaren Leben*, Innsbrucker Festgruss, 1909; H. Gaidoz, "Saint Christophe à tête de chien en Irlande et en Russie," *Mémoires de la Soc. des Antiquaires de France*, 1922, VI, pp. 192-218; P. Saintyves, "L'origine de la tête de chien de St. Christophe," *Revue Anthropologique*, An. 34, 1924; P. Saintyves,

St. Christophe successeur d'Anubis et de Heracles, Paris, 1936; H. Rosenfeld, "Der hl. Christoph," *Acta Academiae Aboensis Humaniora*, X, Abo, 1937; M. Gaster, *Studies and Texts in Folklore*, London, 1925-28, II, p. 1054 ff.

² K. Zwierzina, *op. cit.*, and H. Rosenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

³ H. Rosenfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁴ Χριστοφόρος ὁ ῥέπροβος ὁ ἐκ τῶν κυνοκέφαλων.

thirteenth centuries in countries bordering on the Alps, the bearded giant carrying the Christ-child on his shoulder across a raging torrent. We shall deal here only with the oldest Eastern dog-headed type, which apparently owed its origin to ancient times and which was faithfully preserved in the Greek Church until the eighteenth century.

If Strzygowski's judgment is correct, the two Byzantine low reliefs published by him about fifty years ago must be the earliest representations of Saint Christopher with the dog's head.¹ The Berlin relief from a Christian cemetery in Asia Minor shows two human figures in the act of walking, the left one of which bears an animal's head with short, pricked-up ears. The second relief, discovered in Hamidieh, shows the dog-headed figure of a man beneath which there are the remains of an inscription in which the word *kephalos*, standing probably for *kynokephalos*, can be read. Strzygowski compares the reliefs on the one hand with the representations of Anubis, and on the other hand with the dog-headed figures found in the Eastern Church, but he refrains from stating expressly that they are representations of St. Christopher. It is remarkable that no earlier images of the dog-headed St. Christopher have come to light in the East than those from the fifteenth century. Probably they have fallen victims to the frenzy of the iconoclasts. In Usuard's *Martyrology* of the Stuttgart Landesbibliothek, belonging to the middle of the twelfth century, we possess a particularly valuable figure of St. Christopher with the dog's head, for only twice is such a representation found in the West.² The figure is standing, wearing close-fitting trousers, a garment down to his knees, and shoes, whilst his mouth is enlarged to the shape of a dog's muzzle. The other example of this type in the West is met with in a sixteenth-century window of the Cathedral of Angers in which the later type of traveller bearing the Christ-child is combined with the Eastern dog-headed figure.³ From subsequent ages we have other examples. The most interesting of all, perhaps, is a Russian icon of the seventeenth century (Pl. 20c).⁴ In this, the saint is depicted as a soldier bearing a lance and a shield with his profile turned towards the left: his animal head, surrounded by a nimbus, shows clearly his Egyptian ancestry and his relationship to Anubis, probably a heritage of Christian Coptic to Byzantine and Russian art. Christianus-Christopher, being clothed in the outward panoply of Anubis, inherited his power and his character. Saintyves is, perhaps, not altogether correct in bringing (among other things) the rising of the Sothis-Sirius-Anubis star (the dog star) on July 25th into relation with the feast day of St. Christopher and in making the whole legend and figure of St. Christopher nothing but the fusion of the dog-headed Anubis (or Hermanubis) with Herakles bearing the divine child. But he is definitely right as far as the derivation of the iconographical type in oriental representations is concerned, and this was admitted by Rosenfeld. The truth, however, probably lies between these two points. The facts would seem to be that round the Christianus of the Acts of Bartholomew, who was renamed Christopher, a legend was created and that, by process of elaboration, this legend

¹ J. Strzygowski, "Das byzantinische Relief aus Tusla im Berliner Museum," *Jahrb. d. Preuss. Kunstsamml.*, 1898, pp. 58-66.

² Richter, *op. cit.*, part IV, p. 155; K.

Löffler, *Schwäbische Buchmalerei*, 1927, p. 51.

³ S. Urseau, *La Cathédrale d'Angers*, p. 71.

⁴ P. Schweinfurth, *Russische Malerei des Mittelaltars*, 1930, p. 232 and fig. 84.

led to the composition of the *Passio Scti. Christophori*. The *Passio* was already known to Bede in the ninth century and was the object of a critical correspondence between Ratrannus, a learned monk from Corbie, and Rimbart, later archbishop of Bremen.¹ When the name, the life and the *Passio* had come into being the image of the dog-headed Hermanubis, lord of the nether world and leader of the Dekans, may have been recalled as the model for the representation of the holy cynocephalus. In this connection it should be remembered that through the so-called Mythographer III (Fulgentius Metaphoralis), the dog-headed Hermanubis had even found his way into the early mediaeval encyclopaedias; he was so described by Isidore of Seville and Hrabanus Maurus, who attempted a rationalistic interpretation of this remarkable figure. Hrabanus Maurus writes: "Cur autem capite canino fingunt, haec ratio dicitur, quod inter omnia animalia canis sagacissimum genus et perspicax habeatur."² There exists at Dresden an artistically very remarkable French drawing of about 1420 in which the god, luxuriously clad, bears the winged head of a hunting hound, which forms an amusing contrast with the fashionable clothes of the period. Christopher was not, it is true, among Christians as was Anubis with the Egyptians and Hermes with the Greeks, a conductor of souls of the dead. But he was an apotropaic saint like the animal-headed demons who were engraved on Gnostic gems. His particular power was to protect the faithful from sudden death: whoever gazed upon Saint Christopher would not fail to live through the day. His cult, therefore, had an immense appeal and was widely diffused, as can be seen from the maps printed by Rosenfeld. In Roumania, Russia and in the monasteries of Mount Athos, the representation of Saint Christopher with a dog's head was continued well into the eighteenth century.³ M. Gaster had in his library a Roumanian booklet, of the type which is sold at fairs, of comparatively late date containing the life of the Saint, printed in the monastery of Neamtz under the auspices of the Metropolitan of Moldavia, in which a wood engraving depicted the Saint with a dog's head.⁴

A Byzantian medal, unknown to Saintyves, although it favours his Anubis-Christopher theory, was discovered by Carolidis in the private collection of medals and coins belonging to Nusret-Pasha, governor of Nicomedia. On the medal of Nusret-Pasha, the present whereabouts of which is unknown, and which I know only through a poor illustration, there is shown on the obverse side a human dog-headed figure wearing the garb of a soldier: on the reverse stands a woman, with the globe of the world in her hand, round whom the signs of the zodiac are placed. The male figure with the dog's head holds a staff with twisted serpents in the right hand and a balance in the left.⁵ Round the edge of the medal which bears the image of a dog-headed man

¹ Migne, *PL* CXXI, 1155; Richter, *op. cit.*, part I, p. 22.

² H. Liebeschütz, *Fulgentius Metaphoralis* (Studien der Bibl. Warburg IV), Berlin, 1926, pp. 61 and 119. P. Lavallée, *Le dessin français du XIIIe. au XVIe. siècle*, Paris, 1930, Pl. XII.

³ Cf. Stefanescu, *La peinture en Valachie*,

Paris, 1932, pp. 123, 167, 284: Athos, Caracallou Monastery, 1717; cf. Didron, *Annales Arch.*, XX, 1860, p. 279; Durand, *Annales Arch.*, XXI, 1861, p. 122; Schweinfurth, *op. cit.*, fig. 84; Rosenfeld, *op. cit.*, fig. 7.

⁴ M. Gaster, *loc. cit.*

⁵ P. Carolidis, *Anubis, Hermes, Michael*, Strasbourg, 1913.

runs the following inscription: Γαβριήλ ὁ ἑνδοξος, Μιχαήλ λαμπαδοῦχε, βοήθει (Gabriel glorious one, Michael torch-bearer, help!). Michael is the archangel who conducts the souls to the judgment seat of God, weighs their sins in a balance, defends them from the onslaughts of the devil and is their advocate in the other world. It is natural then that the early Christians of the East should apply to their Christian Hermes Psychopompos the exterior characteristics of the good Hermanubis with the serpent staff. In the light of the little-known discovery of Carolidis the history of the dog-headed Christopher type and its diffusion throughout the Eastern Church causes no surprise. Even the animal-headed Evangelists become more intelligible and less strange. Iconoclasm must be responsible for the destruction of numerous works of art and what we now possess are mere fragments of the whole. But the dog-headed Christopher was met with in Russia, Greece and Roumania during the Middle Ages, spread occasionally into Germany and even penetrated into the enlightened circles of the French Renaissance.

* * *

We have now reached the end of our enquiry where we can positively state that two associations of ideas usually accompany the animal-headed figures: first, their connection with the astral powers whose governors, symbols or hypostases they are: and secondly, their magic power which operates either as a protection of the living against sickness or as a help to the dead in the netherworld. These hybrids, bred on the borderline between two great epochs in the social history of man, were exceptionally long-lived: their mysterious power lay in their strangeness, and the sacred awe that was aroused in believers by beings of monstrous non-human form was the dominant factor in their survival.¹

¹ As late as the 18th century, the period of the great encyclopaedists, the representation of the dog-headed St. Christopher was violently opposed by the Metropolitan of

Moscow, Arsenij Maćejević, and the monks of Mount Athos scratched out the head of the saint. Cf. Rosenfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 387.